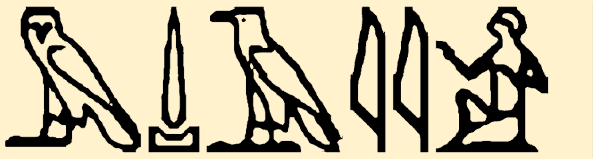

The Medjay Who Missed

It was a sad early morning in Thebes. Amaros, the Pharaoh's Medjay, one of the last Nubian natives is being sentenced to death. A sorrowful stillness has overtaken the palace in Thebes as the Pharaoh's guards take Amaros away from the Pharaoh, leaving the King with one of the High Priests to organize the inevitable funerary ceremony. Although this funeral was not for the unfortunate Medjay. No mortal man is worthy of the high priest's expertise for ceremonies.

As Amaros is taken to his cell, he is almost carried by the palace guards, his body strong with muscle and marked with battle scars, seeming more feeble than a child as he doesn't even have the strength to walk properly, to continue, to face what is inevitably coming. But at the same time, he is accepting his fate, as a man, as a force of the Pharaoh, and most of all a Medjay.

The two guards throw the Medjay in his cell. Although for how long Amaros is staying there is something only the Gods could have foretold as the entire palace is preoccupied with something even more dreadful than the execution of their Medjay. The guards take no pride in it as they lock the cell with Amaros inside.

Every man, woman, and child looks up to and respects a Medjay, let alone a Nubian one, proficient in war with any weapon but most of all the bow and arrow.

As time passes, seemingly infinite, the thoughts start to overwhelm the mind of our Medjay. The blood-covered reeds, the plunged arrow, the limp, lifeless body.

These images come back to him, again and again, repeating in an ever-ending cycle of no resolution. Not even his death could resolve this. The Medjay, with much sadness, looks out the tiny window of his cell which lets in a slither of light.

He can catch a glimpse of Tefnut's temple, it reminds him of the days he used to take his two daughters and wife there during the festivals.

The thought of them gave him some hope even though he knew deep down that he would not be given the privilege to see them again before his untimely death. The early morning turned to an early evening and Amaros was still in his cell the way he was left. No one has come to check on him or give him any water or food. "Dead men don't need them." He thought or perhaps uttered to himself as the moaning from the next cell was getting louder and more disturbing.

The world outside came to mind. Amaros stands up and looks outside the window but the lack of light renders visibility impossible. The Temple of Tefnut might as well not be there anymore. He closes his eyes and starts to pray. In his own words, his way. As a Medjay he was never too involved in religious beliefs outside of the festivals that everyone attended for the food and the drinks.

He continues praying to all the major Gods and Goddesses first and then Tefnut. Although a female deity, she and him had the same motherland in common as well as the bow as a symbol of power, a symbol of life and death. Amaros focuses deeply on Tefnut's visage as it burns bright like the Nubian Sun.

A series of footsteps followed by a tapping breaks the Medjay's concentration. He opens his eyes to see Pihori. One of his fellow Medjay comrades. Amaros looks up to him in shame but Pihuri only pities his former colleague. Pihuri has trouble uttering words, he has a sense of regret, and compassion in his voice, yet fully constructed sentences cannot come out. Amaros politely interrupts him.

"Just tell me when".

Pihuri takes a deep breath. "Tomorrow, morning. The Pharaoh wants to do it before the prince's funeral. "

Amaros lowers his head once again. He nods silently, then asks:

"What about Ahmose? And the kids? The Pharaoh has prohibited their entry into the palace. They say they might bring more bad luck."

Amaros sighs in frustration.

"But I will personally ask for them to be here tomorrow, so you can see them one last time".

"Thank you, Pihuri"

Pihuri begins to leave the prison when he hears Amaros yell:

"It was an accident...!"

Pihuri stops in his tracks.

He turns around back to Amaros.

"You know that," Amaros added.

Pihuri squats down to reach Medjay's eyesight.

"I might believe you, but the Pharaoh and his council don't believe it was just an accident. And frankly, I don't blame them. You are the most proficient archer of all of us, Amaros. How did this even happen?". Pihuri asked.

"The boy went into the reeds to find his arrows while I was training him. I.... gave the bow to the youngest prince to try but I told him not to--"

"Not to fire at the target unless the prince was back at your side... I know. I heard the story."

Pihuri sighed.

“Regardless, the Pharaoh still holds you accountable that his firstborn is now dead."

Pihuri stands up again, nudges the bow on his back, and fixes his clothing.

"May Anubis have mercy on you in the Duat"

And with that, Pihuri is gone. Leaving the soon-to-be-dead Medjay alone in his tiny cell in the cold Theban night. The first light of Amun-Ra finds its way into Amaros ' cell, who has managed to fall asleep to not having to feel the cold night.

He comes to as the sunlight mysteriously flickers in front of his eyes.

Amaros looks around. It's still too early and quiet. With blurry vision from his last nap, he winces as he notices something different on the walls. The flickering light from the window hits the rough stone wall, forming the silhouette of a bow and an arrow, both pointing at the cell bars.

Amaros stands up, confused. He reaches forward to feel the surface of the wall where the light lands only to find the light silhouette starts to protrude from the wall. His fingers wrap around the bow, bringing it closer to him. Without hesitation, she holds on to the arrow and pulls, aiming at the direction of the cell door.

With expert aiming and might, he lets go. The light arrow flies from his fingers, it once again becomes one with the wall's surface and travels from wall to wall until it reaches the locked door and slashes straight through it horizontally.

The clean-cut causes the door to collapse easily.

Amaros now has a way out. But deep down he is thinking. If he flees, he will seem guiltier than he already is in the eyes of the Pharaoh. He will have to run and hide for the rest of his life, or perhaps travel to somewhere outside the Kingdom's reach like back in Nubia or even Greece beyond the ocean. But most importantly, he will have to take his family with him. The risk of letting them be would be too great since the Pharaoh could use them as bait to lure him back.

Regardless, the palace is the last place he wants to be. With his bow of light firmly grasped. He takes his first steps out and towards freedom.

He looks down at the palm of his right hand and sees a light arrow drawn on it. A peculiar sight, more peculiar than anything he'd ever seen or even heard. But it reminded him of yesterday and Tefnut's prayer.

Walking slowly and cautiously to the end of the hallway, Amaros faintly hears steps coming from behind the corner.

"That must be the guard, coming to get me..." thinks to himself. Amaros Reade's bow and arrow, he knows killing and escaping will only make matters worse. But freedom is too tantalizing to refuse now.

He finds himself face-to-face with one of the guards from yesterday. The guards, stunned by Amaros' escape, reach for his sword. Before he even manages to unsheath it fully. Amaros has already let go of his golden, light arrow.

The arrow makes contact with the guard's body, An incredible flash of light and the guard is launched back the way he came from, knocked to the wall, and knocked out completely.

The Medjay fugitive walks over his body, stops, and turns around. He takes a moment to check the guard, there's no blood and no wounds apparent where the arrow landed.

"Things are becoming more and more bizarre," the Medjay thought. And without delay, he continued his escape.

He makes his way to the main hall, the exit gate is in sight. Thankfully for him, it's still too early, and most of the servants, guards, and what have you are still getting ready to serve the royalty. With a deep breath and his trusty bow, Amaros quickly walks - does not run - to his freedom. As he makes it closer and closer, he is already thinking of his next step. Should he go home and alert his family or leave without seeing them?

"Amaros!"

Flabbergasted, Pihuri stops his ex-colleague before he gets any further.

"How did you...?"

The bright light of the bow catches the eye of Pihuri.

"I have to go Pihuri. I can't die here. I'm innocent!"

"I... can't let you go!"

Amaros' body stiffens, he does not want to strike down his old friend and colleague, it will pain him and make him seem guiltier than ever.

He watches Pihuri think deeply for a second or two. Pihuri then utters the words: "Wound me."

"What?" Amaros asks.

"Wound me. Make it believable. Then escape from the rear gate. I will take care of the rest..."

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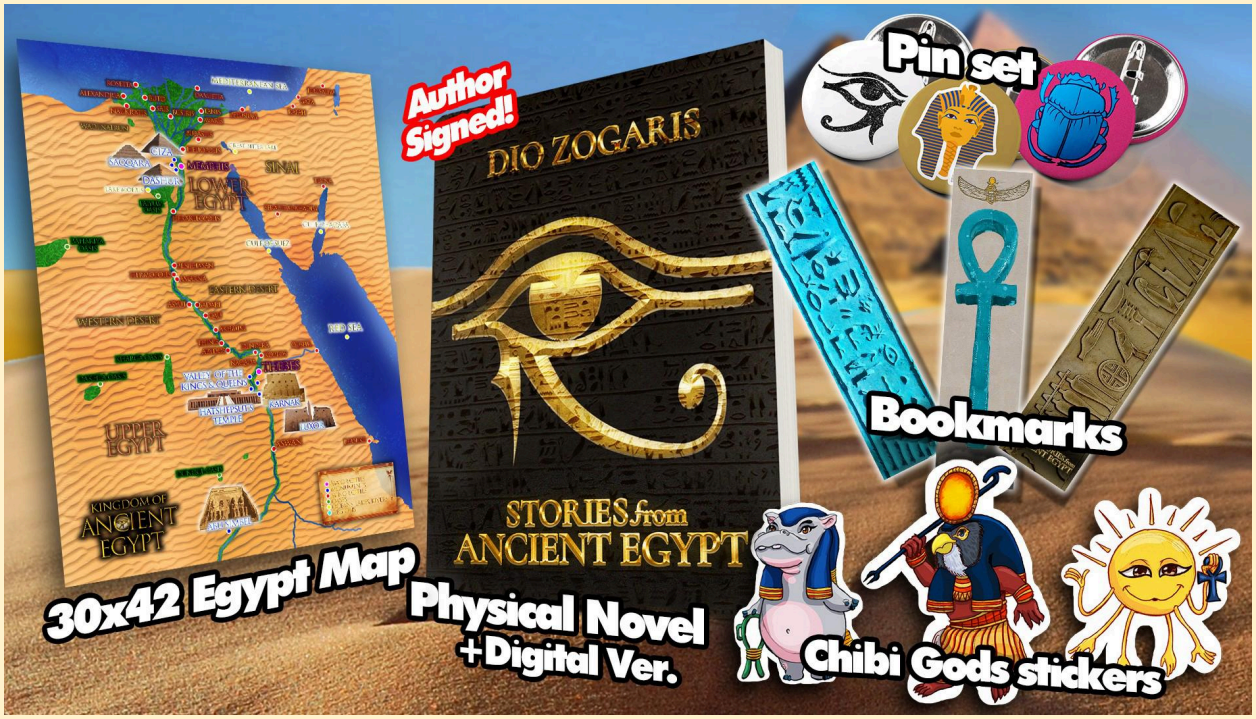
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